

The Victorian state funding initiative

The decision of the Victorian State Government to fund 1500 additional places in higher education could be the most important initiative in Australian higher education policy in recent years. At a cost for the full year of \$8 million it will represent only 0.3 per cent of the State's \$2744 million expenditure on education. It is the first significant state money in higher education since 1974, although there have been some minor contributions to specific programs in the interim.

This Victorian initiative will pose some interesting questions for the other states and for the Commonwealth. It arose out of the Cain Government's commitment to a 'youth guarantee' made at the election earlier this year whereby all young people were guaranteed a place in education or work or some combination of the two. As such it represents a recognition at state level of the inadequacy of Commonwealth policy on access when seen from a broader social perspective. It goes along with a further expansion of TAFE and a plan to spend \$11 million on youth policy initiatives including a provision for 1250 traineeships in the public sector. It can be claimed as part of a coherent policy aimed at reducing youth unemployment and at the same time meeting a specific demand.

Given a further six per cent increase in HSC enrolments in Victoria in 1985, and another slight increase in the pass rate (for policy reasons), we would have seen the number of qualified applicants for places in Victorian universities and CAEs in 1986 go up by about 2000. Thus, apart from the back-log of unsatisfied demand, Victoria alone could have taken up in one year's increase all of the additional places the Commonwealth was prepared to fund nationally. Furthermore, because some other states have noticeably lower participation rates, and the Commonwealth has a commitment to balanced development, Victoria could expect less than a proportionate share of the extra numbers. The additional 1500 state-funded places will just about keep the excess demand in Victoria down to where it was in 1985.

Unsatisfied demand will still be high, and although the real shortage is difficult to estimate, there will probably remain at least 5000 qualified applicants in Victoria who will not be offered a place. There is no sign of the trend toward increased retention rates in senior secondary educa-

tion slackening and the Victorian Government has accepted the recommendation of the Blackburn Report setting a goal of 70 per cent retention to year 12, with half of them going on to higher education. Such a rate would be well above the future participation rate of 21% of the age group in higher education envisaged by the QERC Report. Where does that place the Cain Government now that they have accepted some financial responsibility in an area that had been regarded as exclusively a Commonwealth financial responsibility? It is doubtful whether the Victorian Government seriously expects to carry the full burden of that policy.

"One of the ironies of the situation is that if the teachers' unions continue to oppose the Blackburn recommendations they could see more of the funds shifted to higher education instead, but if they don't the Blackburn proposals will generate even more unsatisfied demand."

To maintain the present position in terms of demand it will be necessary for the means to be found to fund not only the continuation of those additional 1500 in 1986 through the later years of their courses in the next few years, but another 1500 or so new places on top of the previous year's extra places each year for several years. It may be doubted whether the state anticipates maintaining this policy and its pipeline effects until the demographic decline in the number of young people changes the picture slightly after 1990. If it does, that would amount to a total enrolment increase in Victoria of about 20,000 and cost the Victorian Government, if it foots the bill alone, something like \$100m per year by 1991 at 1985 prices and at what appears to have been accepted as fair marginal funding rates. No doubt the state will attempt to persuade the Commonwealth to pick up the tab or part of it. It is hard to see why they should pick it up; and after all,

D. G. Beswick

Centre for the Study of Higher Education
University of Melbourne

\$100m is only 3.6 per cent of the Victorian state budget allocation to education this year and less than 1 per cent of total state government outlays. A shift of that order could be accommodated fairly easily over five years if it had sufficient priority. Interestingly, it would be occurring at the same time as a significant decline in secondary school enrolments even if the high target level for Year 12 retention is achieved. But there is competition for funds, including the cost of a commitment to restructuring senior secondary education following the Blackburn Report, whether or not it is accepted in full. One of the ironies of the situation is that if the teachers' unions continue to oppose the Blackburn recommendations they could see more of the funds shifted to higher education instead, but if they don't the Blackburn proposals will generate even more unsatisfied demand.

Once people in positions of influence begin to make comparisons, at the state level, between the funding of secondary and tertiary education the fat will really be in the fire. CTEC has already done this at another level in pointing out to the Commonwealth how national expenditure per student in real terms in higher education has actually declined while it has increased about 50 per cent in secondary education over the past decade. It is not altogether unfair to suggest, as some commentators have done, that successive Commonwealth Governments have bought off the state aid lobby, and to a lesser extent the teachers' unions, at the expense of higher education. State governments have been similarly responsive. In Victoria, the ratio of students to teaching staff is now better in high schools than it is in universities. That may be justifiable and certainly schools lack support staff, but in many respects conditions of employment are less favourable in higher education. Direct comparisons have not been invited under the separate funding arrangements. Adjustments to declining enrolments will not be easy and it will be difficult to save money in secondary education. But people may react when they see half empty high schools being saved from closure by threats of industrial action while students are clamouring for admission to universities and colleges. Mr Cathie or his successor will earn his keep that day, for it is now

the average student from the average family who is likely to miss out on a place.

It has always been anomalous to have Australian universities and colleges of advanced education totally dependent on federal funding. Except for a few special cases they function under state legislation and education remains constitutionally a state responsibility. (Student financial assistance is differently based in the Constitution as a Commonwealth responsibility, and with a change of government in Canberra it could become a means of 'dry' funding through the individual.) Reliance upon a single source of funding has been disadvantageous to the institutions, and although CTEC has consulted with state bodies as required, its advice cannot be as sensitive to local assessment of need. The states are indeed closer to the people and the proper locus of at least some responsibility for those aspects of education policy like access to universities which have high significance for local communities. It has never made sense to make the state co-ordinating authorities mere branch offices of CTEC, and the Victorian initiative makes that much less likely to be their fate.

Any response of the Commonwealth to changing needs in higher education has been inhibited by the sheer size of the budget item. Given Commonwealth priorities, it has seemed recently that the only way out of the increasingly serious problem of unsatisfied demand is increas-

ed private expenditure, either by raising the private cost of participation for individuals and their families and thus reducing demand and perhaps increasing resources, or by allowing the development of a private sector, or some combination of such possibilities. State funding of additional places may be a partial, if not a completely satisfactory, alternative to private expenditure. It could also turn out that the states would find it advantageous also to support the development of private institutions for the same reasons; but whatever they do, having some of their own dollars in the business will undoubtedly make their voice more likely to be heard.

State influence on individual institutions has been maintained to some extent through state co-ordinating authorities in consultation with CTEC in regard to colleges of advanced education, but it has been very limited as far as universities are concerned. The universities have learned to listen (willingly, at least) only to Canberra. Apart from heavy-handed legislative intervention there has been little the states could do. If they follow the Victorian initiative the states could regain considerable influence at very small cost. As every manager of similar services knows it is the marginal two per cent that counts. The offer of money for specific purposes is very effective in determining policy at current choice points when the base load of funding is secured elsewhere.

This is illustrated both by the distribution of the special Victorian funds across fields of study, locations and institutions, and by their being tied to places filled by special entry procedures. To the extent that special entry criteria are required to be used, Governments will learn later that as a result of special entry requirements cut-off scores for regular applicants will rise further, causing more typical students from ordinary high schools in swinging electorates to miss out on selection.

Finally, one should not see the Victorian initiative only in terms of response to an immediate need. It is consistent with the longer term plans of the Cain Government for economic development of the state. Victoria was affected more than other states by the run down and restructuring of light manufacturing industries. It is currently benefiting from a relatively strong recovery, for which the Cain Government claims some credit. Its education policies are explicitly based on plans for the future development of industries requiring a highly skilled workforce. What happens nationally if one state prefers to invest in the quality of its workforce and another favours the exploitation of natural resources? Mr Cathie was formerly the minister responsible for industrial development. His 1500 places in 1986 make only a small contribution to such plans but their significance could be considerable if the government is fully aware of what it has done and it accepts the consequences.

Unmet student demand in universities and colleges of advanced education in 1986

Bernice Anderson and Ian McDonald*

Introduction

In 1985, the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education undertook the first survey of 'unmet student demand' in universities and colleges of advanced education. The report, covering the admissions period for 1985, was released on 29 April 1985.

The first survey adopted a simple approach using information provided by the tertiary admissions centres in each State on total applicants, total eligible

applicants and those who did not receive offers, and successful applicants who received first preference/other preference offers. In addition there were similar figures supplied by institutions which did not participate in joint admissions centres.

In the 1985 report the AVCC/ACDP clearly indicated that the figures represented a fairly crude measure of unmet demand. The study was unable, for example, to take into account multiple applications to two or more admissions centres, or to admissions centres and individual institutions. No account was taken either of other considerations, such

as applicants who gave preferences confined to a narrow range of courses, and the possible rate of failure by applicants to respond to offers, and it has been suggested since that some account could probably be taken of these to increase the usefulness of their information. In 1986 an attempt was made to discount for relevant factors on the basis of additional information obtained from a modified questionnaire.

The 1986 study relates to undergraduate courses only (ie. Associate Diploma, Diploma and Bachelors Degree), and excludes overseas students. The figures provided reflect the offer

situation as at 21 March 1986, and cover all rounds of offers made to that date. In order to maintain comparability with 1985 data, the tables are identical in format with those presented in the 1985 report. The discounting factors are discussed separately.

When comparing the figures with 1985 data, it should be noted that in 1986 the Australian National University, Northern Rivers CAE and Orange Agricultural College joined the New South Wales admissions centre (UCAC). This would account for some increase over 1985 UCAC figures in the number of applicants, the number of offers made, and the number not receiving an offer. At the same time it could be expected that, by the elimination of one source of double-counting, the gross figures of unmet demand would be reduced by comparison with 1985.

Attention is also drawn to a considerable increase in the number of eligible applicants unable to receive an offer in New South Wales in 1986 which is not accounted for by the inclusion of the three additional institutions in UCAC, but is accounted for by a change in the method of collecting the data. Further details will be found in the footnote to Table 7.

Young people aged 20 years and under

As in 1985, the report highlights the group of young people aged 20 years and under. Table 1 indicates the extent of unmet demand among this group for the 1986 admissions year and breaks down the figures for applicants aged 20 and under into home state applicants presenting on the basis of Year 12 qualifications, interstate applicants presenting on the basis of Year 12 qualifications, and applicants presenting on the basis of other qualifications.

Applicants aged over 20 years

Similar information to that in Table 2 is presented in respect of applicants aged over 20 years. This is set out in Table 2.

First preference offers

Table 3 indicates the extent to which applicants who received offers were successful in obtaining offers for the courses of their first preference.

Table 1
Eligible applicants 20 years and under not receiving an offer, by qualification

Source	Eligible applicants 20 years and under not receiving an offer			Total
	Year 12 Home state	Year 12 Interstate	Other	
Admissions Centre				
UCAC (NSW)	6947	924	1613	9484
VUAC (Vic)	4396	561	1077	6034
QTAC (Q'land)	2015	536	365	2916
SATAC (S.Aust)	1717	299	24	2040
TISC (WA)	672	28	262	962
Total	15747	2348	3341	21436
Tasmania)				
Northern Territory)	see individual institutions listed below			
Australian Capital Territory)				
Institutions not participating in central admissions.*				
Institute of Catholic Education	631	27	44	702
Victorian College of Arts	320	107	45	472
Australian Maritime College	0	0	0	0
Tasmanian State Institute of Technology	85	12	0	97
Darwin Institute of Technology	0	0	0	0
Canberra CAE	31	196	30	257
Total	1067	342	119	1528

* No data relevant to this study were provided by NSW Conservatorium or University of Tasmania since:

(i) NSW Conservatorium has advised that there is substantial unmet demand for the Sydney Conservatorium's courses (620 applications, 200 places). If 'eligible applicant' is defined as a person who is acceptable on the basis of the audition and tests, very few applicants were refused entry because of quota restrictions.

(ii) University of Tasmania has advised that there were no eligible applicants who did not receive an offer of a place in the University.

(iii) Abbreviations:

UCAC — Universities and Colleges Admissions Centre (NSW)
 VUAC — Victorian Universities Admissions Committee
 QTAC — Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre
 SATAC — South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre
 TISC — Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (WA)

The authors have been requested by the Board of QTAC to point out a source of possible misunderstanding in relation to the statistics in this Report.

The Queensland Board is concerned that because of the difference in the ways in which the various admissions centres have defined an 'eligible applicant', particularly because of the higher standard they believe to have been applied in Queensland, the unsatisfied demand in Queensland has been understated. The 2015 shown in Table 1, column one, includes only those in the top 56 per cent of Year 12 students. An additional 4644 Year 12 students who applied for places were not included. The Board believes that most or possibly all comparable students in other states would have been included in the data provided by other states.

The authors accept that the inclusion of the additional members in the QTAC figures may be appropriate for more accurate interstate comparisons while noting the difficulty of drawing precise conclusions because of the different ways of defining eligible applicants. The additional applicants brought to notice by the Queensland Board would also have the effect of increasing the initial estimate of unmet demand.

Table 2
Eligible applicants over 20 years not receiving an offer, by qualification

Source	Eligible applicants over 20 years not receiving an offer		Total
	Year 12	Other	
Admissions Centres			
UCAC (NSW)	308	3599	3907
VUAC (Vic)	549	1609	2158
QTAC (Q'land)	73	1115	1188
SATAC (S.Aust)	981	580	1561
TISC (WA)	11	499	510
Total	1922	7402	9324
Tasmania)			
Northern Territory)	see individual institutions listed below.		
Australian Capital Territory)			
Institutions not participating in central admissions.			
Institute of Catholic Education	27	44	71
Victorian College of Arts	324	123	447
Australian Maritime College	0	0	0
Tasmanian State Institute of Technology	0	56	56
Darwin Institute of Technology	0	0	0
Canberra CAE	24	115	139
Total	375	338	713

See footnote to Table 1

Table 3
Applicants who received offers, 1986

Source	Number who received first preference offer	Number who received other than first preference offer	Total
Admissions Centres			
UCAC (NSW)	26770	12729	39499
VUAC (Vic)	13177	12226	25403
QTAC (Q'land)	13556	7049	20605
SATAC (S.Aust)	8464	3716	12180
TISC (WA)	7186	2775	9961
Total	69153	38495	107648
Tasmania)			
Northern Territory)	see individual institutions listed below		
Australian Capital Territory)			
Institutions not participating in central admissions.*			
Institute of Catholic Education	0	0	0
Victorian College of Arts	0	0	0
Australian Maritime College	0	0	0
Tasmanian State Institute of Technology	1332	0	1332
Darwin Institute of Technology	591	39	630
Canberra CAE	3548	411	3959
Total	5471	450	5921

See footnote to Table 1

All eligible applicants

The following three tables show totals and percentages of eligible applicants who received and did not receive offers. In summary the tables indicate:

Total number of eligible applicants	145101
Total number who received offers	112100
Total number of eligible applicants who did not receive an offer	33001

This figure of 33001 can reasonably be assumed to be in excess of the number of persons who would actually have accepted an offer of a place, for the same reasons as indicated in the 1985 report. It is presented here to indicate the extent to which 'unmet student demand' in 1986 appears to have increased over that as revealed by the 1985 survey. A comparison of the figures for both years is presented in Table 7.

Table 4
Eligible Applicants

	Total Eligible	Received offer		Did not Receive offer	
		No.	%	No.	%
Admissions Centre					
UCAC	52890	39499	74.68	13391	25.32
VUAC	33595	25403	75.62	8192	24.38
QTAC	24709	20605	83.39	4104	16.61
SATAC	14253	10652	74.74	3601	25.26
TISC	10308	8836	85.72	1472	14.28
Institutions not participating in central admissions					
Institute of CE	1628	855	52.52	773	47.48
Victorian C of Arts	1099	180	16.38	919	83.62
Australian Maritime C	149	149	100.00	0	0.00
Tasmanian State IT	1485	1332	89.70	153	10.30
Darwin IT	630	630	100.00	0	0.00
Canberra CAE	4355	3959	90.91	396	9.09
Totals	145101	112100	77.26	33001	22.74

See footnote to Table 1

Table 5
Eligible applicants 20 years and under

	Total Eligible	Received Offer		Did Not Receive Offer	
		No.	%	No.	%
Admissions Centres					
UCAC	37600	28116	74.78	9484	25.22
VUAC	27728	21694	78.24	6034	21.76
QTAC	15979	13063	81.75	2916	18.25
SATAC	8578	6538	76.22	2040	23.78
TISC	7701	6739	87.51	962	12.49
Institutions not participating in central admissions					
Institute of CE	1464	762	52.05	702	47.95
Victorian C of Arts	551	79	14.34	472	85.66
Australian Maritime C	114	114	100.00	0	0.00
Tasmanian State IT	425	328	77.18	97	22.82
Darwin IT	96(a)	96(a)	0.00	0	0.00
Canberra CAE	2733	2476	90.60	257	9.40
Totals	102969(a)	80005(a)	77.7	22964	22.3

See footnotes to Table 1.

(a) See footnotes to Table 6.

Eligible applicants by age and qualification

The data have been analysed to compare the extent to which certain sub-groups of students have fared differently in the years surveyed. A breakdown of eligible students not receiving offers by age and qualification for both 1985 and 1986 is presented in Table 8. Of particular interest in this regard is the extent of unsuccessful applications among Year 12 home state applicants aged 20 and under (the population which could be equated with 'school leavers') and among those over 20 years presenting with other than Year 12 qualifications (the population which could be equated with 'mature age students').

The table shows that these two groups, which account for the major part of the population of applicants, experience similar levels of unmet demand. While there has been an increase in unmet demand among school leavers from 1985 to 1986, this group is not over-represented among those who did not receive an offer. The proportion of mature age students among eligible applicants has remained stable, and among those who did not receive an offer this group is represented in the same proportion as in the total population of eligible applicants. The AVCC/ACDP wishes to draw attention to these figures so that it will be clear that mature age students are neither over-represented among those who did not receive an offer, nor are they taking an increasing proportion of available places from school leavers. The AVCC/ACDP believes that unsuccessful mature age applicants, many of whom are seeking to update an earlier qualification or undertake necessary retraining, represent genuine unmet demand.

Discounting factors

The figure of 33001 eligible applicants not receiving an offer represents gross unmet demand which has not been discounted for double counting, restricted range of preferences, or rate of rejection of offers. In order to take these factors into account, certain assumptions have been made about the extent to which the available data reflect these factors.

1. Double Counting

While there is no way of ascertaining exactly how many applicants have applied to more than one admissions centre or institution, it would be reasonable to assume that many interstate applicants would have done so, and that many who applied to a non-participating institution would also have applied to their state admissions centre.

In 1986, there were 2348 interstate

Table 6
Eligible applicants over 20 years

	Total Eligible	Received Offer		Did not Receive Offer	
		No.	%	No.	%
Admissions Centres					
UCAC	15290	11383	74.45	3907	25.55
VUAC	5867	3709	63.22	2158	36.78
QTAC	8730	7542	86.39	1188	13.61
SATAC	5675	4114	72.49	1561	27.51
TISC	2607	2097	80.44	510	19.56
Institutions not participating in central admissions					
Institute of CE	164	93	56.71	71	43.29
Victorian C of Arts	548	101	18.43	447	81.57
Australian Maritime C	35	35	100.00	0	0.00
Tasmanian State IT	1060	1004	94.72	56	5.28
Darwin IT	12(a)	12(a)	0.00	0	0.00
Canberra CAE	1622	1483	91.43	139	8.57
Totals	41610(a)	31573(a)	75.87	10037	24.13

See footnotes to Table 1.

(a) Excludes a portion of 522 eligible applicants in the 'other' category at Darwin IT which cannot be allocated by age.

Table 7
Comparison of unmet demand in 1985 and 1986

Source	Total eligible Applicants		Not receiving offer			
	1985	1986	1985		1986	
			n	%	n	%
UCAC	41649	52890	6727	16.2	13391	25.3
ANU, Orange, Northern Rivers	5235	included above	755	14.4	included above	
VUAC	31757	33595	8604	27.1	8192	24.4
QTAC	24257	24709	5273	21.7	4104	16.6
SATAC	13174	14253	2989	22.7	3601	25.3
TISC	10275	10308	1603	15.6	1472	14.3
Other institutions	12050	9346	3303	27.4	2241	24.0
Total	138397	145101	29254	21.1	33001	22.7

See footnotes to Table 1.

In the 1985 survey the UCAC figures used were those of applicants who had a Higher School Certificate examination aggregate of 220 or better. This was a somewhat arbitrary figure, chosen in order to establish some comparability with other states. In fact some offers were made to applicants with aggregates below 220. Many institutions in New South Wales do not specify a minimum aggregate below which candidates are ineligible for consideration.

The 1986 survey tables were changed to show the breakdown in terms of the distribution of aggregates of unsuccessful Year 12 applicants. This change in the method of collecting the data has resulted in a much larger number of applicants being reported as eligible than was the case in 1985. The 6947 eligible Year 12 applicants who did not receive an offer include 6493 who had aggregates in the bottom 40 per cent of HSC candidates.

applicants and 2241 applicants to non-participating institutions who did not receive an offer. (The figure for interstate applicants includes only Year 12 aged 20 and under. No figure is available for other groups. Thus the

2348 could be an under-estimate of the total number of interstate applicants not receiving an offer.)

If it is assumed that 100 per cent of the students in these two categories have been double counted, the gross

figure of 33001 would be reduced by 4589, leaving a figure of 28412. If on the other hand it is assumed that some of these students have made only one application and therefore represent genuine unmet demand, the reduction would be adjusted accordingly to obtain a figure somewhat higher than 28412. An 80 per cent adjustment for double counting would result in a figure of 29330.

2. Restricted range of preferences

It was noted in the 1985 report that the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, in its estimate of unmet demand, did not include applicants who gave preferences confined to a narrow range of courses (e.g. medicine only). Whether or not such applicants represent genuine unmet demand is a matter on which opinions will differ. The number of preferences which applicants can indicate varies from state to state, and the chances of an applicant receiving an offer when presenting a restricted range of preferences are much higher in some states than in others. This is clearly shown in Table 9, which sets out the information given by the admissions centres on the number of applicants who listed specific numbers of preferences, and the number of offers made to each sub-group.

Of those who did not receive an offer, 7651 had applied for one preference only, and 5438 for two preferences only. Depending on the assumptions one makes about genuine unmet demand, these figures can be subtracted from the gross figure in full or in part. If, for example, one assumes that 100 per cent of one preference applicants and 50 per cent of two preference applicants do not represent genuine unmet demand, the lowest figure of 28412 referred to above can be further reduced by 10370, leaving 18042. Assuming 80 per cent of one preference applicants and 50 per cent of two preference applicants, and applying this to the higher figure of 29330 in 1 above would leave 20490.

3. Rate of rejection of offers

There is evidence from the data collected annually by some admissions centres that the rate of rejection of offers is about 30 per cent overall, and 50 per cent at the lower end of the ability scale. By applying a discounting factor of 30 per cent to 18042, a figure of 12629 is obtained. A 50 per cent discounting factor leaves 9021. Similar discounting figures applied to the higher figure above would result in unmet demand levels up to 14340.

Table 8
Eligible students not receiving an offer of a place by age and qualification

Category	1985			1986		
	Total eligible	No offer	% No offer	Total eligible	No offer	% No offer
20 and under						
Year 12 Home State	73556	13608	18.5	78798	16814	21.3
Year 12 Interstate	8047	2343	29.1	9776	2690	27.5
Other	11669	3138	26.9	14395	3460	24.0
Total	95933(a)	19489(a)	20.3	102969	22964	22.3
Over 20						
Year 12	9815	2703	27.5	7937	2297	28.9
Other	28189	6696	23.8	33673	7740	23.0
Total	41525(a)	9865(a)	23.8	41610	10037	24.1
Grand Total	138397(b)	29294	21.1	145101(c)	33001	22.7

See footnotes to Table 1.

- (a) Includes data for Canberra CAE for which no further breakdown was provided.
 (b) Includes data for Darwin IT for which no further breakdown was provided.
 (c) Includes 522 eligible applicants at Darwin IT which cannot be allocated into age groups.

Table 9
Outcome of Applications of Eligible Applicants by Number of Preferences Expressed

Admissions Centre/Institution	Number of preferences expressed								Total
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	
UCAC									
Eligible Applicants									
Number	9672	7889	6903	6749	6889	14472	0	0	52574
Percent	18.4	15.0	13.1	12.8	13.1	27.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
Received Offer									
Number	5802	4693	4615	4862	5433	13168	0	0	38573
Percent	60.0	59.5	66.9	72.0	78.9	91.0	0.0	0.0	73.4
VUAC									
Eligible Applicants									
Number	2829	2324	2319	2622	2677	2847	2588	15389	33595
Percent	8.4	6.9	6.9	7.8	8.0	8.5	7.7	45.8	100.0
Received Offer									
Number	1012	1136	1399	1744	1932	2136	2022	12310	23691
Percent	35.8	48.9	60.3	66.5	72.2	75.0	78.1	80.0	70.5
QTAC									
Eligible Applicants									
Number	4333	3045	2561	2278	2350	10142	0	0	24709
Percent	17.5	12.3	10.4	9.2	9.5	41.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Received Offer									
Number	3415	2513	2160	1901	1993	8623	0	0	20605
Percent	78.8	82.5	84.3	83.5	84.8	85.0	0.0	0.0	83.4
SATAC									
Eligible Applicants									
Number	2488	1680	1224	980	3736	0	0	0	10108
Percent	24.6	16.6	12.1	9.7	37.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Received Offer									
Number	1753	1326	1046	881	3449	0	0	0	8455
Percent	70.5	78.9	85.5	89.9	92.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	83.6

Conclusion

The collection of additional data in the 1986 survey has produced a measure of greater accuracy than that obtained in 1985, and for this reason it is difficult to make precise judgements about the extent to which unmet demand has increased or decreased. However, it should be noted that in 1986 some institutions enrolled fewer students than in the previous year because they had over-enrolled in 1985, though still remaining within the target numbers. A factor which has operated to produce an apparent reduction in unmet demand in Victoria has been the funding by the Victorian Government of 1500 additional places in higher education institutions in Victoria in 1986. In New South Wales the inclusion of many more students from the lower end of the ability scale in the group of eligible applicants has produced an apparent large increase. Overall, the range in which unmet student demand lies in 1986 is probably very similar to that of 1985.

Depending on the assumptions made about the extent to which each of the factors discussed above represents genuine unmet demand, the actual figure must lie within a range of between 9000 and 14000

places. AVCC/ACDP consider therefore that between 9000 and 14000 students eligible for entry and willing to accept an offer of a place were unable to commence studies in a college of advanced education or a university at the beginning of 1986.

* This Report was prepared for the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in Advanced Education by Bernice Anderson and Ian McDonald of the AVCC secretariat.

University continuing education — an asset or a liability?

Brian Smith

Department of Community Programmes
The University of Newcastle

It would be true to say that every Australian university has had, from its inception, some involvement in adult and continuing education, but for the majority this has remained a modest involvement. Indeed, with very few exceptions, Australian universities have seen adult and continuing education as a worthy but essentially peripheral area of activity. For two decades keynote speakers at conferences have stressed the importance of 'lifelong education' and predicted an imminent explosion of continuing education activity but this has yet to eventuate. There is at present, a steady increase in public participation in what might be called popular adult education, though this is hard to verify since so many different agencies are involved.

There has certainly not been the prophesied evolution of continuing education as a major part of the work and acknowledged responsibility of the tertiary institutions; it remains very much in the optional-extra category. This could be

because there simply is not the demand by graduates and other vocationally skilled people for ongoing education which some educational and sociological theorists are convinced that there must be simply because they believe there ought to be. Or it could simply reflect the lukewarm attitude to continuing education both of the universities and the people within them and of the public authorities which, through the purse-strings, influence the directions which universities take.

Change in prospects?

If it be the latter, then there are a few hopeful signs of change. For many years the Universities Commission, and later the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC), did little more than reaffirm annually the right of universities to engage in continuing education if they so wished, provided they could do so within their existing fund allocations. But in 1985 the CTEC gave some official recognition to the significance of adult

and continuing education within the general spectrum of education provisions by commencing a national survey with a view to reporting to Government and, presumably, recommending steps that might be taken at a national level to rationalise and develop adult and continuing education provision throughout the country. The Commissioner, Professor Richard Johnson issued his Draft Report in October 1985, and it makes very encouraging reading for the small band of professional adult educators within the universities.

Whereas Johnson does not suggest that universities are, or should be, major providers of adult and continuing education, there is a clear acceptance that they do have a responsibility and a fairly strong suggestion that they could, to general advantage, give adult and continuing education work a somewhat higher priority. He says, for instance, (p.8) — to the extent that general adult education — for instance the discussion of social and